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ABSTRACT

Broad scale implementation of the career education concept will be increased if the processes of planning and change are fully understood and utilized by practitioners. Change occurs with or without planning. The major purpose of planning is to bring about some needed and agreed upon change designed to correct or improve upon an existing situation. Appropriate planning provides for collection and analysis of data makes possible an orderly and systematic procedure for achieving change, identifies goals and objectives, and identifies feasible alternative courses of action. For effective and meaningful planning and change, the relationships between the two processes must be carefully considered. Planned change requires at least three fundamental components: Analysis of "what is" and identification of discrepancies between "what is" and "what should be," planning or designing of procedures to reduce the discrepancies, and provisions for implementing and evaluating the plans. Organizations should direct special attention to awareness of need, collection and analysis of data, determination of defensible alternative procedures, development and testing of plans, and dissemination of worthwhile practices. In addition to understanding the interrelationships of change and planning, educational organizations must consider the relationship of many environmental factors to change, including attitudes, technology, legal constraints, role of leadership, evaluation, and sources of change. (LMS)

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PLANNING AND CHANGE: ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Preface

For the past several years, an overriding concern of state directors/coordinators of career education -- and indeed of proponents of career education in general -- has been related to implementation of the concept throughout the educational system. Numerous procedures for such implementation have been established, and there have been numerous instances in which implementation has taken place. It is not yet possible, however, to assert that implementation has occurred on a broad scale.

This document has been prepared in an attempt to further facilitate broad scale implementation of the career education concept. The document is based on the premise that the probability of such implementation will be increased if the processes of planning and change are fully understood and utilized.

The document is intended then primarily to acquaint state directors/coordinators and other practitioners of career education with these processes, and to create an awareness of the relationships that, of necessity, exist between them. This, at least in the thinking of the author, is a requisite first step in "Utilizing the Processes of Planning and Change to Implement Career Education".

David L. Jesser

Washington, D.C.
April 15, 1977

PLANNING AND CHANGE: ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

David L. Jesser

It is the business of the future to be dangerous, and this danger can only be overcome by men who are willing to look at the present nakedly and boldly, and deal with it on its own unique terms, and not those of the more comfortable past.

Alfred North Whitehead

The educational enterprise -- whether situated in the public or private sectors, the elementary, secondary, post-secondary or higher education segments, or in the local, state, or national levels of government -- is in trouble. Virtually every aspect is confronted with serious problems and puzzling dilemmas. Solutions must be found.

It would be impossible to list, in any specific manner, all of the complex problems that are being encountered by various elements of the educational enterprise. However, it is possible to cite what might best be called problem indicators, including the attitudes of the American public toward education as discerned by the "Gallup Polls" and reported by the Phi Delta Kappan; the declining achievement test scores that have been reported by the National Education Assessment Program and the Educational Testing Service; and the growing resistance of the public to provide the funds that are required to keep schools open that has been reported in Time, Newsweek, and other news sources.

These obviously are only a few such indicators, but they do illustrate the kinds of problems that exist in the educational

field today. They also serve to illustrate the enormity of the problems and the awesome dimensions of the dilemmas. On the one hand, it would seem that the public is clamoring for a different and improved educational endeavor. On the other, it would seem that the public is saying that they -- the taxpayers -- will not furnish the monies that are needed to provide for the improvements.

It is interesting to note that even a most cursory examination of the "problem indicators" and dilemmas in education do indeed point, or at least relate, to some type of increase, and this in turn would seem to be one horn of the dilemma. The numerous and varied publics concerned with education are calling for more classrooms, better facilities, higher salaries, better teachers, more efficiency, increased accountability, more relevance, better programs, and so on almost ad infinitum. How can the educational enterprise, which is faced with many manifestations of declining resources, cope with the demands that are being made, to say nothing about meeting them?

While U.S. Commissioner of Education, the late James Allen commented in 1969 on the seriousness of some of the more specific problems confronting American education:

- Some children are going through school without learning how to read.
- Teachers are restless in many parts of the country, largely over economic issues, and some teacher strikes are in progress or threatened.
- School finances are in an inflationary squeeze. Financing education is a nationwide problem of mounting urgency.

- Not enough of the educational effort is being directed toward children who need it most -- the poor and the disadvantaged.
- Parents are seeking greater say in the operation of the schools.
- More student demands for changes are expected.

Commissioner Allen, however, demonstrated a somewhat optimistic view when he went on to observe that

> ....there is a revolution going on in American education....It is a force emerging from the people most concerned with education -- a force which, when harnessed by the educational community, can result in the finest possible educational opportunity for all children, youth and adults.

As suggested earlier, the dilemmas confronting education would seem to relate to the solutions to the problems. How may <u>better</u> facilities be provided, for example, when there is a distinct trend toward disapproval of local bond issues? How can <u>higher</u> salaries be provided at a time when competition for the tax dollar precludes any "additional" monies for education? Similar questions could be asked in terms of all educational problems. The questions, however, are all indicative of a more basic and fundamental dilemma confronting all of education: <u>How can needed educational changes -- improvements -- be effected when support (which can exist in a variety of forms) is often either non-existent or extremely slow in developing?</u>

Educational leaders, together with educational institutions and agencies that occupy positions of leadership within the field, must concern themselves with finding ways of resolving the

fundamental dilemma described above. Needs -- or needed changes -- may be very apparent, and comprehensive plans to effect those changes may be formulated. But unless the needed changes actually take place, little if any positive gain will be possible. Ways must be found in which those needed changes -- improvements -- in education may be implemented. To do so, however, requires some understanding of the nature of change.

THE NATURE OF CHANGE

In every aspect or segment of society -- indeed, in virtually every aspect of life itself -- change is an ever-present and ever-recurring pheonomenon. It has occurred; it does occur; and, in some fashion, it will occur. In fact change is perhaps the only true constant known to man. Change, in one form or another, is truly inevitable.

The inevitableness of change can be illustrated in a variety of ways and within a variety of contexts. It can be seen in the philosophical sense of time: Today quickly fades into yesterday, while tomorrow soon becomes today. It can readily be seen in a biological framework: Humans, together with all other living organisms, undergo a continuing process of metamorphosis -- of change -- from the instant life begins until it ceases to exist. And it can be seen in a geological sense: The earth, since its very origins, has undergone many physical changes -- some sudden in nature, and some at extremely slow rates. The concept of the inevitableness of change, in all of the examples above, can be readily seen.

Fundamentally (and somewhat anachronistically), the apparent inevitableness of change causes many people to perceive "the business of the future to be dangerous". Rational thinking people must recognize that change -- in some form -- will occur. But in far too many instances little attention is given to determining what changes are likely to take place; when they can reasonably be expected to occur; or to what the probable consequences might be. It is, in most situations, precisely this lack of attention to the future that causes apprehension about the "dangerous" part of the future. Too often educators have been content to look at educational problems -- or needs -- in terms of the "more comfortable past". Don Miller, while with the Operation (PEP) Project (Preparation of Educational Planning) in California emphasized this problem:

> ...Creative and courageous adaptation to change, then, is a problem of major proportions, and one that is becoming daily more complicated as the tempo of science and technology continues to accelerate while management of change -- the procedures by which present practices are adjusted to advancement -- remains far behind.

In the same discussion, Miller also noted:

> With the continuious flux of things since the end of the Second World War, we need to think differently about change -- we need to consider ferment and flux as the normal state. This concept is new to American education. Certainly change is fashionable and popular today -- but few educators have considered seriously the deeper ramifications of change, and still fewer have considered ferment and flux as normal.

The fact that change does -- and will -- occur has serious implications for all of society. The advances in technology,

the population explosion, and the discovery of new ways of harnessing and utilizing previously untapped sources of energy have each had dramatic -- and sometimes tragic -- consequences for society. They offer mute testimony to the fact that change does occur, with or without planning. Educational leaders, together with others concerned, must recognize this rather fundamental principle relating to change.

While there is an inevitableness about change, this need not -- indeed should not -- imply that we have neither the ability nor the capability to exercise some degree of control or influence over many of the changes that will occur. If such were the case, we would simply be forced to accept the changes, together with the consequences thereof, and to adjust, in some fashion, to both. When acting in this manner, we would be admitting, either overtly or covertly, that we possess only a capacity for adjusting to our environment.

But, as we experience or anticipate change, we do have other alternatives available, including:

- Ascertaining the nature and direction of changes that are likely to take place, and then attempting to be ready for the changes when they occur.
- Exerting some degree of control over changes that will probably occur, and thus maximizing the beneficial aspects of minimizing the harmful aspects.

Other alternatives possibly could be listed, but they would probably represent a combination of those already noted. But of the two basic alternatives available, is there one that would appear to have a greater advantage over the other? It should be

obvious that the last noted alternative seems to have this quality. If this is truly the case, efforts must then be made to implement this procedure when a given change is anticipated. It is when this is done that planning, in the best sense of the word, really takes place: it is when this is done that meaningful change occurs.

Change should be as purposive as possible. For this to happen serious planning must take place. There is a vast difference between change and change that occurs as a result of planning. When change is directed toward accomplishment of a stated goal, it does have a purpose. The purpose, in essence, is that of correcting the inadequacies of -- or bringing about some form of improvement to -- an existing situation or condition. Educational change, and the leadership efforts of educational organizations or agencies, must be channeled in this direction. A basic understanding of change is essential. A thorough knowledge of planning is imperative.

THE NATURE OF PLANNING

It has been observed that while "educational change is bound to happen, needed educational change [on which there is general agreement] must be made to happen". The observation illustrates -- and re-emphasizes -- the concept of the inevitability of change, but it also underscores the concept that through appropriate planning, needed changes can better be implemented. It also serves to point to the major purpose of planning: to effect, implement, or

bring about some needed and agreed upon change that is designed to correct or improve upon an existing situation.

While the basic or fundamental purpose of planning is as indicated above, there are several other purposes that should be considered, even though they might be perceived by some as being sub-units found within the basic or fundamental purpose. But whether they are considered as discrete units or sub-units, the following concepts must be considered as being integral components of the planning process, and as being illustrative of the nature, or essence, of planning.

- Appropriate Planning Procedures Provide the Means By Which Information May Be Gathered and Data Analyzed.

  In many instances, planning -- or what is purported to be planning -- is undertaken as a result of someone's hunches or wishful thinking, without any serious consideration being devoted to determination of need. In situations in which there has been no determination of need established -- where the basic problems have not been clearly identified -- there is no real need for planning, because the "for what" is missing.

  At the same time, it should be recognized that need can only be determined through comprehensive analysis of "what is" and "what might be". Obviously, information must be collected and carefully scrutinized before any discrepancy between "what is" and "what might be" -- and this constitutes need -- can be ascertained.

- Appropriate Planning Makes Possible an Orderly and Systematic Procedure for Achieving a Stated and Needed Change.

  Within the total society, and especially within identifiable components of the society -- education, government, service groups, military organizations, business, industry and labor, for example -- it is

difficult to locate anyone who "does not plan". Everyone plans -- but in many instances such planning consists only of speculative or emotional attempts to "reach the unreachable star". In other instances, "planning efforts" are of an extremely haphazard nature, and have no logical or enduring base. Neither of these approaches represents appropriate planning -- neither recognize the need for an extensive or comprehensive examination of long-range needs or probabilities. Planning, as a process, must be systematic; it must represent a predetermined course of action. Only in this fashion will it be an orderly and organized process that leads to and facilitates attainment of stated goals.

- Appropriate Planning Includes a Procedure for Identification of Goals and Objectives.

The planning process is only a means of achieving a given end. Therefore, efforts must be made to ensure against the possibility that planning becomes the end. It is essential that the end -- the "for what" -- be positively identified and clearly stated. When this is done, the end -- the goal or objective -- becomes a tangible quantity, and methods can then be devised that will help to determine whether or not the goals or objectives are being attained.

Planning must relate to the establishment of clearly stated goals and objectives. People are prone to want a "better" educational program, but in so doing they do not provide any clearly stated and measurable goal. In what way(s) should it be better? Educators have been accused of "jumping" over the problem in their haste to get to a solution. Others, including lay citizens, may also have a tendency to do this. In any event, vagueness and ambiguity of goals have no place in the planning process. Both planners and change agents must know where they want to go, and they must have some means of knowing if and when they arrive.

- Appropriate Planning Includes a Procedure for Identification and Projection of Feasible Alternative Course of Action.

Few, if any, situations exist in which there is only one solution to a given problem. Generally speaking, however, it is usually possible to identify one solution

> as being the "best". Such identification, however, can usually take place only after several feasible alternatives have been examined. If only a single procedure for effecting a desired change is set forth, there is no defensible way in which it can be described as being "better" or "best", it must be better that something else, or it must be the best of several things. The identification -- together with analyses -- of feasible and defensible alternatives becomes then an integral component of planning. It is another characteristic of effective planning.

These represent the basic components of planning. They represent the nature of planning. The planning process is, as has already been indicated, a procedure by which some agreed upon change is likely to result in improvement of some type to a given situation. It -- planning -- should be inextricably linked to change.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PLANNING AND CHANGE

It should be clear that if the processes of planning and change are to be both effective and meaningful, the relationships between the two processes must be carefully considered. Obviously, there should be a reason (or a series of reasons) why a needed change should take place. In similar fashion, there should be a reason (or a series of reasons) for any planning that is undertaken.

Each process -- that of planning and that of change -- may have separate or discrete purposes or reasons. However, this should not be interepreted to mean that each process can exist in total independence of the other. For either process to be meaningful, there must be a high degree of correlation between the

two. One process simply cannot occur in an effective manner without the other. The following concepts are useful to illustrate the interdependence -- or symbiotic relationship -- that should exist between planning and change.

Change can occur without meaningful planning; conversely, planning can take place without resulting in an identified needed change. When change occurs without meaningful planning the result -- the change -- will probably be something that "just happened". In similar fashion, when a "planner" formulates a plan that is never (or incapable of being) implemented, the result is something that "didn't happen". In neither case can there be an effective change. If, however, proper attention is given to the interrelationships between planning and change, the total process -- from initial planning to implementation of change -- will become more operational, and there will be a greater assurance of bringing about or effecting a desired change.

The primary function of appropriate planning must be identification of needed changes. Unless needed changes are determined through a careful analysis of a "given" vs. an "ideal" (in a practical sense) situation, and unless the reasons for the needed change are clear, it is extremely doubtful that any planning that may be perceived as having been accomplished will ever have any direction. Proper utilization of the planning process should enable one to ascertain need, and, at the same time, it should provide a vehicle for -- or a logical process of -- meeting the identified need.

ORGANIZING FOR PLANNED CHANGE

The overall obejective of planning is -- or most certainly should be -- that of enabling an organization to arrive at, or move positively in the direction of, some pre-determined goal. The goal (or goals) must be realistic in nature. Goals, when established, must be based on a demonstrable need. The need -- or perhaps the awareness of the need -- must be established before the overall goal is set; to proceed otherwise would result in meaningless -- and often unattainable -- goals.

Once the need has been demonstrated and the goals defined, it is necessary that an orderly process or mechanism be developed that will ensure, to some degree, attainment of, or progress toward, meeting the particular need. Such a process or mechanism in reality consists of an adequate or appropriate organizational procedure.

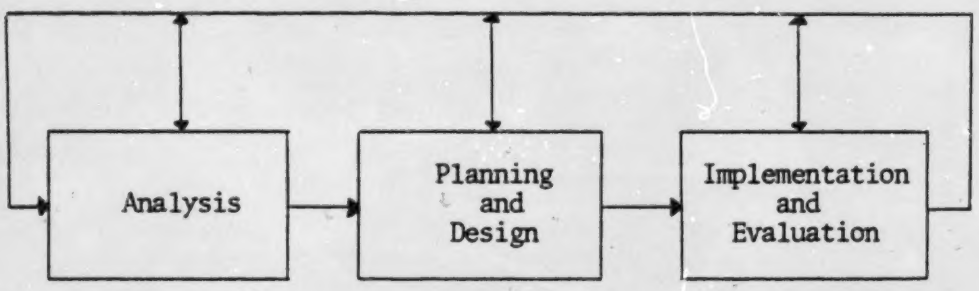
Concerned publics or groups, if they are to be successful in leadership efforts relating to effecting needed changes in education, must be organized in a manner that will facilitate the implementation of planned changes. Such organization, in its most basic form, would seem to require at least three fundamental components:

- There must be provisions for analyzing the existing situation -- the "what is" -- and for identifying the discrepancies between "what is" and "what should be";
- The organization must provide for actual planning or designing of procedures that may reasonably be expected to reduce the apparent discrepancies; and

- The organization must include provisions for implementing -- and determining the value of -- the plans or designs that have been formulated.

The three necessary components, together with a "feedback loop" design, are illustrated in the following diagram:

Basic Organizational Components of Planning



While the components noted above are essential to successful planning within the organizational structure of a group, they are not the only considerations that should be made. The organization should also provide for:

- Developing internal planning mechanisms;
- Coordinating educational planning; and
- Assisting others to develop comprehensive planning.

Unless the organization carefully considers and includes provisions for the essential components and relationships within its organizational framework, the results of any planning effort are likely to be ineffectual. Organizations may guard against such ineffectuality, however, by directing special attention to the following concepts.

- Awareness of Need

  Robert Howsam of the University of Houston, has suggested that an educational institution or agency should include, in its staffing pattern, a position for an "educational heretic". According to him, "the assigned task [would be] that of helping others in the organization to perceive things as they really are and thereby inducing efforts at improving conditions".

  While a person in such a position might not have the responsibility for actually effecting a given or needed change, he or she would have, as a basic responsibility, the function of helping people -- those who are apt to be affected by the change -- to understand the need for -- or awareness of -- the change. Unless an organization or educational agency provides for this function, those who probably will be affected by a proposed change are not likely to actively work toward its attainment.

- Collection and Analysis of Data

  Closely related to an awareness of need -- if not an essential ingredient -- is the necessity of a sound procedural arrangement for an orderly and systematic collection -- and analysis -- of information relative to the problem at hand. Unless provisions for such a procedure are incorporated and utilized, there can be no rational bases for the myriad number of decisions that must be made.

- Determination of Defensible Alternative Procedures

  An organization that is concerned with planning for needed changes must include, or provide for, the capability of identifying reasonable or defensible alternatives.

- Development and Testing of Plans

  The educational agency or organization must have the capability of developing plans, but at the same time it must also have the capability of testing -- or determining the validity -- of the plans. This should not imply that every plan developed within the organization or agency, for example, must be tested within the agency. The organizational structure must, however, contain provisions whereby the necessary testing can be accomplished.

- Dissemination of Worthwhile Practices

  If a plan has been developed for the purpose of bringing about a needed change, and if the testing of the plan has demonstrated that it will -- or is likely to -- produce the needed change, there should be, within the organization, a mechanism through which the plan might be implemented where similar needs are determined to exist.

  Some educational leaders refer to this process (or mechanism) as diffusion. Still others use the phrase, "spread of practice". However it is described, the basic purpose is, in reality, that of making others who face similar problems aware of the potential and availability. Too often, the "wheel is re-invented" merely because of a difference in geographical locale. Methods must be found to avoid "re-invention of the wheel". The agency or organization must include provisions for effective dissemination or diffusion practices if the complete cycle of effective planning is to occur.

DEVELOPING APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES FOR PLANNING AND CHANGE

As has already been stated, there are numerous ways in which an organization, agency or institution may plan for a needed change. The most desirable way -- or strategy -- is that one which brings about the needed change in the most effective and meaningful manner. In order to accomplish this, the organization must have the capability to identify and develop reasonable strategies that will facilitate accomplishment or attainment of the task or goal.

In developing appropriate strategies for change, considerable emphasis must be given to the processes of -- and to the interrelationships between -- planning and change. In addition to the need for an understanding of the interrelationships, however, there is an equally important concept that must be considered -- the relationship of the environment to change. Every change will

occur in some type of environment. Should the environment be conducive to a needed change, ways should be found to utilize favorable environmental factors as facilitating forces. On the other hand, should the environment be resistant to a needed change, strategies will have to be designed that will tend to decrease the resistance or factors which contribute to the resistance.

It is imperative that educational organizations and agencies, as they attempt to develop appropriate strategies designed to implement needed change, must consider many environmental factors and relationships including:

- Attitudes conducive to change
- Developing competencies to cope with change
- Developing competencies to administer or manage change
- Planning for the implementation of change
- Evaluating the effectiveness of change
- Adaptation to change
- Support services and change
- Communication and change
- Technology and change
- Sources of change
- Resistance to change
- Legal constraints to change
- Role and function of experimental models
- Role of leadership in the change process

- Role of consultants in the change process
- Role of specialized consultants in effecting change
- Role of specialized change-agents
- Court influences on change
- Internal and external influences on change
- Institutionalization and implementation of change

CONCLUSIONS
(Implications for Education)

As increasing efforts to improve educational opportunities are made -- at the local level, the state level, and even the federal level -- a much higher degree of sophistication in the art of planning and effecting change will be required.

Educational planners will have to look upon planning only as a means to an end -- not an end in or of itself. At the same time, if planning is properly perceived as being only a means, it is essential that educational planners, or those who assume responsibility for this type of planning, clearly understand the relationships that exist between planning -- the means -- and needed change -- the end.

The relationships must be clearly understood. Unless educational leaders deliberately strive to create mechanisms in which the processes can be interwoven, or at least to function in concert with each other, planning undoubtedly will continue to be a "professed good". As such, planning will be actively

sought and supported. At the same time, however, such efforts -- those that do not recognize the close interrelationship between planning and change -- will not result in very tangible or significant improvement or needed change.

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